

Declassified and Approved For Release 2011/12/09 : CIA-RDP10-00750R000100840001-7

Mr. Edward T. Isolan
Chair/House Permanent Select
Committee on Intelligence
from former DCI
James R. Schlesinger
Re: HR 5805

Sept 10, 1984

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Center for Strategic & International Studies
Georgetown University • Washington DC

September 10, 1984

The Honorable
Edward P. Boland
Chairman
The House Permanent Select Committee
on Intelligence
Room H-405
U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I should like to indicate my strong support for H.R. 5805 (the Mazzoli-Whitehurst bill) intended to address the plight of certain former CIA wives. As you know, this is a very small group, estimated at fewer than 70 women, who were left uncovered by PL 97-269, when that legislation was passed in 1982. These former wives would now become eligible for the same benefits pertaining to wives who were divorced after the eligibility date in current law.

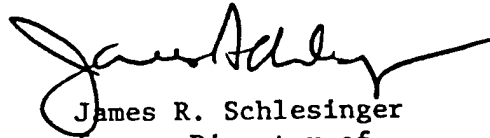
All of us have come better to understand the substantial services given by American wives in their overseas posts -- as well as in their service at home. All such wives will have served at least five years overseas -- sharing many of the same hardships and risks of their husbands. They will have been a valued part of the "official family" in such overseas posts. All their service has been on an uncompensated basis -- for the American government has always treated such a couple as a unit -- although only the husband received a paycheck.

Times have changed, Mr. Chairman, and with them so have social mores (no doubt regrettably). After many years of service -- as wife, mother, and U.S. representative overseas -- the marriages of these women broke up. It is too late for most to acquire a profession -- or even suitable employment. Some are in parlous circumstances; some destitute. The proper legislation would, in my judgment, provide simple justice for

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such women -- in the form of the benefits to which they would have been entitled, had their marriages not suddenly (sometimes inexplicably) been terminated by divorce. These benefits would terminate in the event of remarriage. The cost to the government would be infinitesimal; yet, the moral obligation is substantial. I trust that you and your colleagues will see fit to move this legislation that removes the inappropriate discrimination of the arbitrary date based on current law.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James R. Schlesinger", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

James R. Schlesinger
former Director of
Central Intelligence